THE

EVIDENCE;

OR,

Religious and Moral Gazette.

RELIGION AND MORALITY ARE THE BASIS OF HUMAN FELICITY.

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THE LIFE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

(Continued from page 52.)

THE Apostle Paul was cotemporary with Christ, and from the most authentic cronology, there was little difference in their ages. It is very certain, however, that Christ was not personally known to Paul, indeed, that he was not at Jerusalem, during Christ's public ministry. Previous to this, Paul had completed his studies under the celebrated Gamaliel and returned to Tarsus, the place of his nativity. Here it is most probable he was employed in tent-making, a business he afterwards pursued occasionally, and which was both lucrative and honorable. It was customary among the Jews to train their sons to some handy-craft occupation, to which they could at any time resort as circumstances might require. At Tarsus, we may suppose, Paul continued till after the miraculous descent of the holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and that intelligence of this event excited his curiosity and brought him to Jerusalem. On his arrival, he found the city in an uproar. Peter's sermon had given great dissatisfaction to the Jewish Sanhedrim. For while it implicated them in the crime of murder, it drew three thousand from their embrace, to build their hopes of eternal life on the death of the murdered. Filled with resentment at this discourse, and fearing the consequences might prove prejudicial to their own religion, they raised a bitter persecution against the christians.

PAUL, partly from principle, and partly from the vehemence of his natural temper, became a zealous devotee to the leaders of this desperate faction. Accordingly we hear of him for the first time, present and aiding in the martyrdom of Stephen. The second time his name is mentioned, he is engaged in his memorable expedition to Damascus. In the way thither, he was met by Christ miraculously appearing to him and here was he made a subject of the special influence of divine grace.

IN this interiew, he was commissioned by Christ to be a minister and an apostle to carry his name to the gentiles.

FROM this time the character of Paul undergoes a complete change. He is as zealous a friend to Christ, as he had been an enemy. He puts on the spiritual armour and becomes a champion under the banner of his Lord. His abilities are now turned into their proper channel, and h

extensive acquisitions in science are consecrated to the interest of the Redeemer.

CHRIST's eye was on the Apostle in his first formation. Accordingly the structure of his mind was admirably suited to the part, he was to achieve. Early initiated into the prevailing philosophy of the age, expert in the original scriptures and perfectly conversant with the different sectaries of the Jews, he was qualified to encounter opposition to the best advantage, in all the forms it might assume. Connecting the most eminent piety with such an unusual assemblage of natural and acquired indowments, constitutes a character of very rare occurrence,

THE eminence of this man will appear, both as a christian and an Apostle of our Lord, by considering the sentiments he embraced, and the part which he acted.

No sooner was Paul made a subject of God's discriminating grace, than he underwent a complete revolution in his religious sentiments. From a proud and bigoted Pharisee, he becomes a humble worshiper. The saviour whom he had ignorantly and vilely set at naught, he now exalts as the only redeemer of an undone world, and takes the place of a contrite penitent at his feet. From the moment of his conversion his mind is rectified respecting human impotency and guilt. The exercises and actions, which he had deemed meritorious of divine favor, he now sees to be unmixedly sinful in God's sight. Illuminated by the spirit of all grace he has a view of the divine law in its just claims and import. Paul gives us an account of his own personal exercise both before and after he was arraigned at the bar of a sin-hating God. He had depended on the merits of his actions for justification and life, and here he felt himself secure. Blind to God's law and his own heart, he thought himself a fair candidate for a high seat in the kingdom of glory. But when it pleased God, to remove the veil of ignorance from his mind, a law presented itself to him of which he had never before dreampt. Against this law his heart rises in direct opposition. "When the commandment came sin revived." He felt himself to be an undone sinner, and was necessitated to relinquish all hope on the ground of his former expectation. "The commandment which was ordained to be unto life he found to be unto death." He was now slain by the law, that he might, through an act of boundless mercy in Christ be made alive unto God. After he was renewed by the operation of the Holy Ghost, he found himself delighted with that law, which in his convicted state, he had strenuously opposed. "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good." From this time he has correct views of God and himself. Looking attentively into the divine law and his own heart, he is overwhelmed at the awful contrast, and in the language of the deepest humiliation and self-loathing, exclaims, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death."

AFTER Paul's conversion he became at once settled in his opinion on the leading doctrines contained in the christian system. Respecting the doctrine of total depravity, he declares without the least equivocation. What he knew by experience, was witnessed by the holy Ghost. And he records his sentiments on the subject in these words.

" the carnal mind is in enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be." He concluded both Jews and Gentiles to be all under sin, and that eventually the whole would be under the necessity of assenting to this truth. He was careful to draw a dividing line between saints and sinners and left no room for the conclusion, that there was the least motion of right affection in the heart of any unrenewed man, however fair in his external deportment. He tells us expressly, " that the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Placing this doctrine in the centre of his system, his other sentiments, were hereunto perfectly conformable. He enjoined the necessity of the new birth to qualify men for the kingdom of heaven. " Circumcision availeth nothing nor uncircumcision; but the new creature." Forewarned that this important subject would be contested by a wicked world, he expressed himself with peculiar exactness and precision. Viewing men by nature alienated from the life of God, and dead in sin, he asserted their restoration to be through a positive act of the divine spirit creating them anew unto good works. " You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin." He maintained that this grace was sovereign and discriminating, not according to our works, but according to the divine purpose in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Paul was perfectly explicit in his sentiments respecting Christ's divinity and equality with the father. —He asscribes to Christ divine titles, attributes and honors. He represents him to be " the brightness of the father's glory and the express image of his person;" that " he was before all things, and that by him all things consist;" that he was the source of being and the glorious proprietor of all worlds; " all things were created by him and for him." He is careful to exhibit Christ in his mediatorial capacity and asserts the mysterious union of the divine and human natures, constituting one person, & thereby qualifying him to mediate between an offended lawgiver & his rebel subjects. On this point he expresses himself in thsse words to the Philippian Church. " Let the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the father."

The Apostle considers the death of Christ as the only medium of favor to undone sinners; that this death exhibited the righteousness of God so that he can " be just, and yet the justifier of him who believes in Jesus." He discarded even the possibility of escaping destruction, only through the efficacy of Christ's blood. He set forth the necessity of good works as expressions of love to God, and that without these expressions, to pretend union with Christ was utterly vain. Instead of softening down the divine law in its requisitions, he contends earnestly for the contrary. Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid!

yea, we establish the law. On whatever heart the divine image was enstamped, he was persuaded, that it was the intention of God to raise the subject of such impression to glory. That though the perseverance of the saints was infallible, he plead that their holding out to the end was indispensable. Man's activity and dependence, in obtaining salvation, he maintained, and exhorts in these words, "work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." In short the apostle was no Antinomian. He was full in the doctrines of grace. A day of future retribution, which would result in the eternal destruction of ungodly sinners, & in the blessedness of the righteous, he set forth with the most unsullied clearness. The foregoing are some of the leading sentiments embraced and defended by the apostle Paul after his conversion to the christian faith.

(To be concluded in our next.)

COMMUNICATION.

For the EVIDENCE.

Memoirs of the Rev. Benoni Bradner.

(Concluded from page 60.)

IN the extremity of his distress, his piercing cries were sometimes heard at the distance of half a mile. Perceiving the approach of his pains, which usually came on and went off at frequent intervals in the manner of fits, he would often exclaim *Heavenly Father, if it be possible let this cup pass; yet not my will but thine be done.* And when those pains had a little abated, he would adore that goodness by which his existence was preserved. Frequently he repeated, with a cordiality not to be expressed, those words of Job, *Tho' he slay me; yet will I trust in him.* He said he knew not the reason of his being placed in the front of the battle; but observed that it must be for some wise purpose. And he considered it an excellent opportunity for the trial of his faith. It was his earnest prayer that he might not be suffered to dishonor the christian name, by the failure of his patience. When distant friends, who called to see him, expressed their astonishment that he yet remained in the land of the living; he would assure them that it was not less easy for God to support one sinner thro' a long scene of distress, than to uphold the damned thro' the endless torments of future misery. The last time that he ate and drank, he said he should never eat, or drink again. He then, with the utmost composure, besought the Lord, that he would prepare him for the event of his holy will. His strength was now exhausted, and he dropped away, like one faling asleep on the 24th of January 1804. Tho' his mortal body must remain, for a season, entombed in the grave; yet, we trust his immortal spirit is safely conveyed to the blissful realms above. The disorder with which he was afflicted, and which put a period to his days, was the stone in the bladder.

IN the course of his life, Mr. Bradner experienced many sudden vicissitudes. In the late revolutionary war, and by some other accidents, he lost the chief of his property which he had intended for his support in advanced life. Under these divine allotments, he would often say that he *knew both to abound, and to suffer need.* And he endeavored always to preserve a quiet and contented state of mind.

Here, it may not be improper to notice, that upon his stating to the Legislature the losses he had sustained by loaning large sums to the public, they made him a donation of four hundred pounds, which, tho' by no means an equivalent, served to shew the estimation in which he was holden. The same sum was given him by his parishioners and others, on the account of a more recent loss, occasioned by fire.

THOSE who had the happiness of being acquainted with him, will acknowledge that benevolence was a shining trait in his character. His charity seemed to embrace every order of rational existence. And his liberal hand was ever open to supply the wants of the indigent. He had a remarkable degree of genuine cheerfulness which seldom deserted him for any length of time. He possessed it constitutionally; and he cherished it, from principle, as the duty and privilege of a christian, and a mean of preserving health and of diffusing happiness to those around him.

As a minister of the gospel, Mr. Bradner possessed considerable eminence. He appeared to have an extensive and thorough knowledge of the doctrines of the bible. Subjects in divinity were, in general, familiar to his mind. And his acquaintance with experimental religion was evidently genuine. A becoming gravity marked his conduct in the pulpit. He seemed to possess an unusual affection for the welfare of souls, which, operating on his enfeebled frame, would, sometimes, almost overcome him. His zeal, though ferved, was accompanied with a correspondent and useful degree of knowledge. He was blessed with the talents of an easy and entertaining speaker. And his public discourses, for the most part, were, unusually, interesting and instructive.

As a neighbor and friend, he was benevolent, obliging and faithful. Few, perhaps, have given more decided proofs of true benevolence than he. His bowels seemed to yearn with compassion over his needy fellow-creatures. He was always ready to relieve their distresses, and to supply their wants. In befriending the destitute, he set a noble example for the imitation of others. He possessed a truly philanthropic spirit. In friendship, he was sincere, warm and engaging. Tho' his acquaintances were numerous, he appeared to have gained their almost universal esteem and affection. Scarcely was there one disposed to reproach his character, or avoid his society.

As a parent, his tenderness and vigilent care were, perhaps, without a parallel. In council, in example, and in affection to his children, he could scarcely be equalled.

IN his last illness, his conduct was such as to excite the admiration of every person who saw him. A cordial resignation to the will of heaven characterized his behaviour under that dispensation of providence, which was of the most afflictive and distressing nature. Tho' in frequent agonies of pain, a murmur, or complaint was not known to escape his lips. It was after the space of two years, spent in the most violent distress of body, and marked with the patience and submisson becoming a christian, that he resigned his body to the dust and yielded up his spirit into the hands of God. But tho' dead, his example lives; and loudly admonishes surviving friends to *walk in the steps* of his *faith*, and to *be also ready* for the solemn approach of death.

PARAPHRASE ON ECCLESIASTES XII.—1 7.

From Bishop Horne.

A VIEW of the different materials of which man is composed, may teach us to form a proper estimate of him. He stands between the two worlds, the natural and the spiritual, and partakes of both. His body is material, but its inhabitant descends from another system. His soul, like the world from which it comes, is immortal; but his body, like the world to which it belongs, is frail and perishable. From its birth it contains in it the seeds and principles of dissolution, toward which it tends every day and hour, by the very means that nourish and maintain it, and which no art can protract, beyond a certain term. In spite of precaution and medicine, "the evil days will come, and the years draw nigh, when he shall say, I have no pleasure in them."—Pains and sorrows will succeed each other, as "the clouds return after the rain," blackening the face of heaven and darkening the sources of light and joy. The hands, those once active and vigorous "keepers of the house," grow paralytic, shall "tremble;" and "the strong men," those firm and able columns, which supported it, shall "bow themselves," and sink under the weight; the external "grinders" of the food, the teeth, "shall cease, because they are few," and the work of mastication shall be imperfectly performed. Dim suffusion shall veil the organs of sight, "they that look out of the windows shall be darkened." 'The doors,' or valves, 'shall be shut in the streets,' or alleys of the body, when the digestive powers are weakened, and the sound of the 'internal grinding is low.' Sleep, if it light upon the eye-lids of age, will quickly remove again, and 'he will rise up' at the time when the first 'voice of the bird proclaims the approach of the morning. All the daughters of music shall be brought low;' he will hear no more the voices of singing men, and singing women. Timidity and distrust will predominate, and he will be alarmed at every thing; 'he shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way.' As the early 'almond tree,' when it flourishes in full blossom, his hoary head shall be conspicuous in the congregation, the sure prognostic not of spring, alas, but of winter; he who like 'the grasshopper,' in the season of youth was so sprightly in his motions, now scarce able to crawl upon the earth, 'shall be a burden' to himself, and the organs of sense being vitiated and impaired, 'desire and appetite 'shall fail.' The spinal marrow, that 'silver cord,' with infinite ramifications of the nerves thence derived, will be relaxed and lose its tone; 'and the golden bowl,' the receptacle of the brain, from which it proceeds, 'shall be broken.' The vessel by which, as a 'pitcher,' the blood is carried back to the heart for a fresh supply, shall be broken at the fountain, and the wheel, or instrument of circulation, which throws it forth again to the extremities of the body, shall be broken at the cistern. When this highly finished piece of mechanism shall be thus disjointed and dissolved, 'then shall the dust,' of which it was formed, 'return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.' Learn we from hence, to bestow on each part of our composition that proportion of time and attention, which, upon a due consideration of its nature and importance, it shall appear to claim at our hands.

SKETCHES FROM SCRIPTURE.

"*We would see Jesus.*"

John xii.—21.

I WOULD *see Jesus* in *prosperity*, at her fascinating light may not ad me to a dreadful precipice; but at his good spirit may whisper to y heart the noble inducements ristians have to devise liberal ings; that I might ever be saying, What am I, O Lord; that thou ould put into my heart to do these ngs, when the earth is thine and e fulness thereof? It is but thine wn that I return unto thee."

I WOULD *see Jesus* in *adversity*, cause he is a friend born for such state; because when all the fala- ous props of happiness give way, s single name alone supports the ilding. I would see Jesus in ad- rsity, that I might order my cause fore him, for he has all the pow- in heaven and on earth, and can sily arrange future events so as throw lustre on the darkest cir- mstances.

I WOULD *see Jesus* in *health*, that might turn at his gentlest reproof; at I might not be full and forget od, but be devoted, body as well soul, to his praise.

I WOULD *see Jesus* in *sickness*, be- use he healeth all my diseases; alone dispenses the balm of Gi- ad, he alone is the physician there-

I WOULD *see Jesus* in *ordinances*; for what are ordinances, destitute of him? As the body without the spirit is dead, so are ordinances without Christ. He shews himself through the lattices, he appears in his beauty, he is as the dew unto Israel, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; his people sit under its shade with great delight: his fruit is pleasant to their taste. They say continually in ordinances, "Make haste, O my beloved, be thou like a young hart on the mountains."

I WOULD *see Jesus* in *social intercourse*. For what are all the charms of friendship? What the refinements of taste? What the pleasure of conversation? Are they not all unsatisfying, and delusive, unless sanctified by the grace of our Redeemer?

I WOULD *see Jesus* in *my own heart*, as Lord of its affections, of its purposes, of its pleasures, as the grand mover of its hopes and fears, the Author of its existence and happiness.

I WOULD *see Jesus* in death, as the sun of Righteousness, whose beams in the darkest moment can spread light and healing. I would listen to his voice, saying, "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life." "Fear not, I have the keys of hell, and of death." Arise, O thou wearied follower of

thy crucified Lord, and enter into thy rest.

I WOULD *see Jesus* in *glory*, for what is heaven itself without him? But when we shall see him as he is, *then shall we be like him*, and be forever happy in his presence.

London Mag.

Pleasing Consideration.

SINCE missionary societies have been formed and multiplied both in Europe and America, the christian world wears a brighter aspect. The faithful have been strengthened "to come up to the help of the Lord," and their designs have been astonishingly succeeded. The East-Indias, Africa and the islands in the south seas, have received the gracious visitation of God, and are now listening to the tidings, of life and immortality. Some, who, a few days ago, were sacrificing to idols, are now worshipping the living God in spirit and in truth. Both continents have been enriched with the heavenly dew. Upon the whole, the prospects of religion in the world were never brighter, than at this moment. The inducements for christians and christian ministers to be alive in the vineyard of their Lord, present themselves with an almost irresistible energy. Their is an evident indication in the events now transpiring, of the approaching period when righteousness shall flow down our streets like a river. Let the faint hearted take courage. Let the desponding know that Zion's king reigneth. Let every christian arise and shine; and while we offer our abilities and influence to aid a cause infinitely superior to every other, let us unite in this importunate and fervent supplication, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

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